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TALKING POINTS FOR ADDI BRIEFING OF HPSCI
28 April 1987
Situation in Sri Lanka

1. **Terrorist attacks in Sri Lanka over the past 10 days--almost certainly carried out by Tamil insurgents--have torpedoed President Jayewardene's efforts to revive stalled peace talks, at least for the near term. Many moderate members of his cabinet are supporting a strong military response.**

-- The Sri Lankan government has publicly vowed to destroy northern insurgent strongholds, and has carried out aerial bombing of suspected militant positions since last week.

-- The suspected guerrilla bases are in heavily populated areas and high Tamil civilian casualties are likely. The government air attacks probably will have only limited success against the insurgents, but Colombo is also preparing to launch ground attacks in the north.

-- Colombo blamed a small insurgent group--the Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students (EROS), allied with the most powerful group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam--for the attack, because of the group's past involvement in bombings in Sinhalese areas and its specialization in demolition and economic sabotage.

2. **India has strongly condemned last week's terrorist bombings, and probably will at least temporarily suspend public support for the militants, as long as Colombo's military operations do not result in high Tamil civilian casualties.**

-- Indian officials have implied that leaders of the Tigers now in New Delhi were strongly reprimanded by the Indians for the bombings.

-- New Delhi is unlikely to completely abandon the Tigers, however, as long as the group remains the most powerful insurgent organization and the key to a lasting peace settlement.

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3. **The Soviet Union has played only a minor role in the Tamil insurgency.** 25X1

They have assisted Tamil groups in the formation of friendship societies with other bloc nations. 25X1
Moscow wants to appear supportive of New Delhi's leadership on the Tamil issue.

-- All the Tamil insurgent groups profess some support for Marxist revolutionary goals, but we believe the commitment is limited and that their basic ideology is Tamil nationalism.

-- Sri Lankan President Jayewardene is likely to renew his emphasis on the insurgents' Marxist leanings and terrorist tactics to gain US arms and training support.

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Sri Lanka: Major Incidents Since 10 April

11-12 April	Militants direct mortar fire on Jaffna fort, attack army patrol in Kurumbasetti.
12 April	Militants kill 12 to 14 civilians in various incidents in eastern Sri Lanka.
14 April	Army camp near Kandy raided, several automatic weapons stolen, Sinhalese extremist group, JVP, suspected.
16 April	Landmine in Mannar kills four soldiers.
17 April	"Good Friday Massacre"—122 people killed, including estimated 66 off-duty military personnel.
19-20 April	Special Police Task Force carries out retaliatory raids on Tiger camps in the east.
20 April	Suspected Tamil militants murder 16 Sinhalese villagers near site of Friday massacre.
21 April	Car bomb at Colombo bus terminal kills 119; Tamil militants bomb train in northwest city of Mannar.
22-25 April	17 soldiers killed as militants attack northern camp; 15 soldiers killed in landmine explosion. Government launches retaliatory air raids on northern insurgent strongholds; at least 100 killed.

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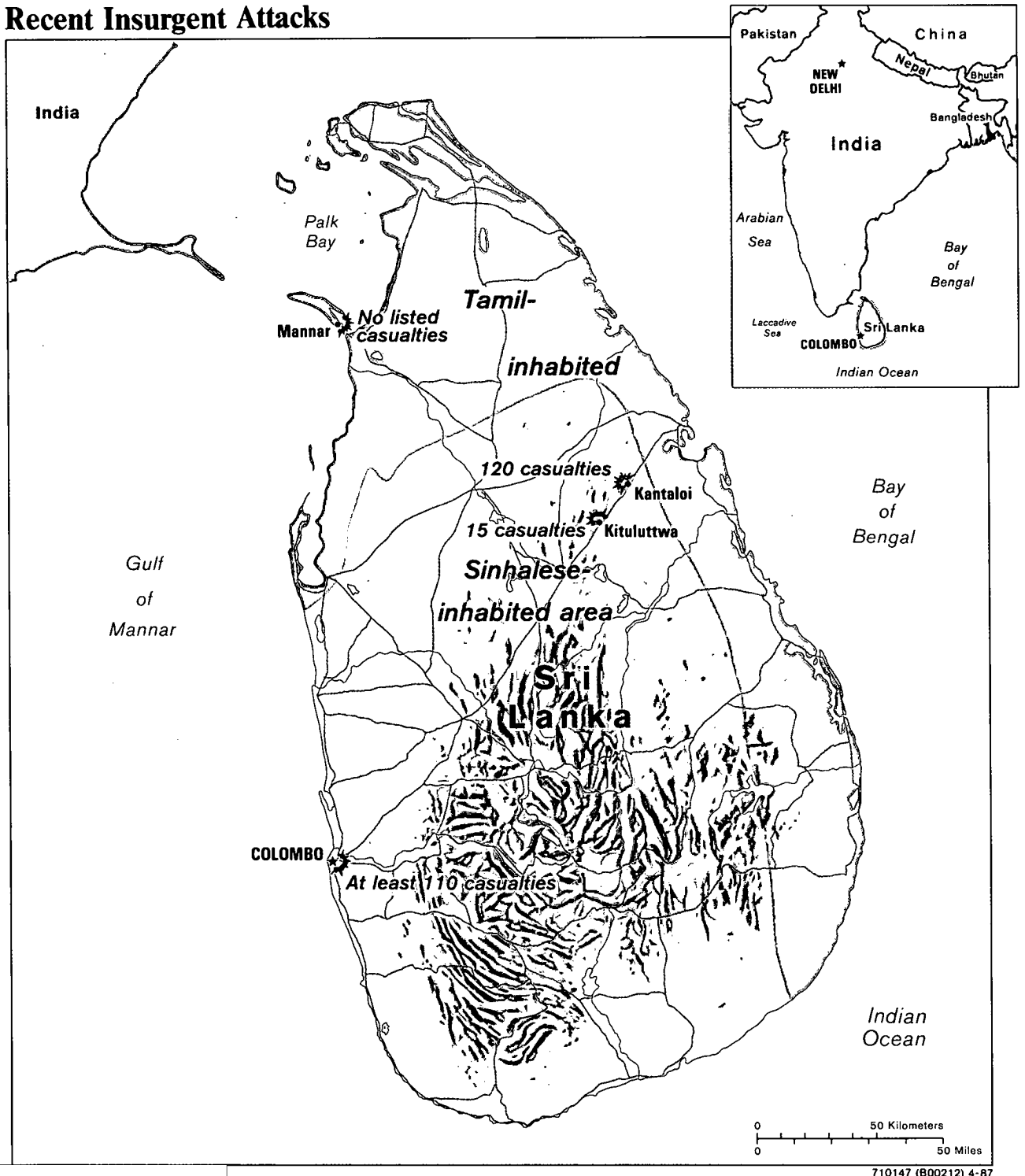
Recent Insurgent Attacks



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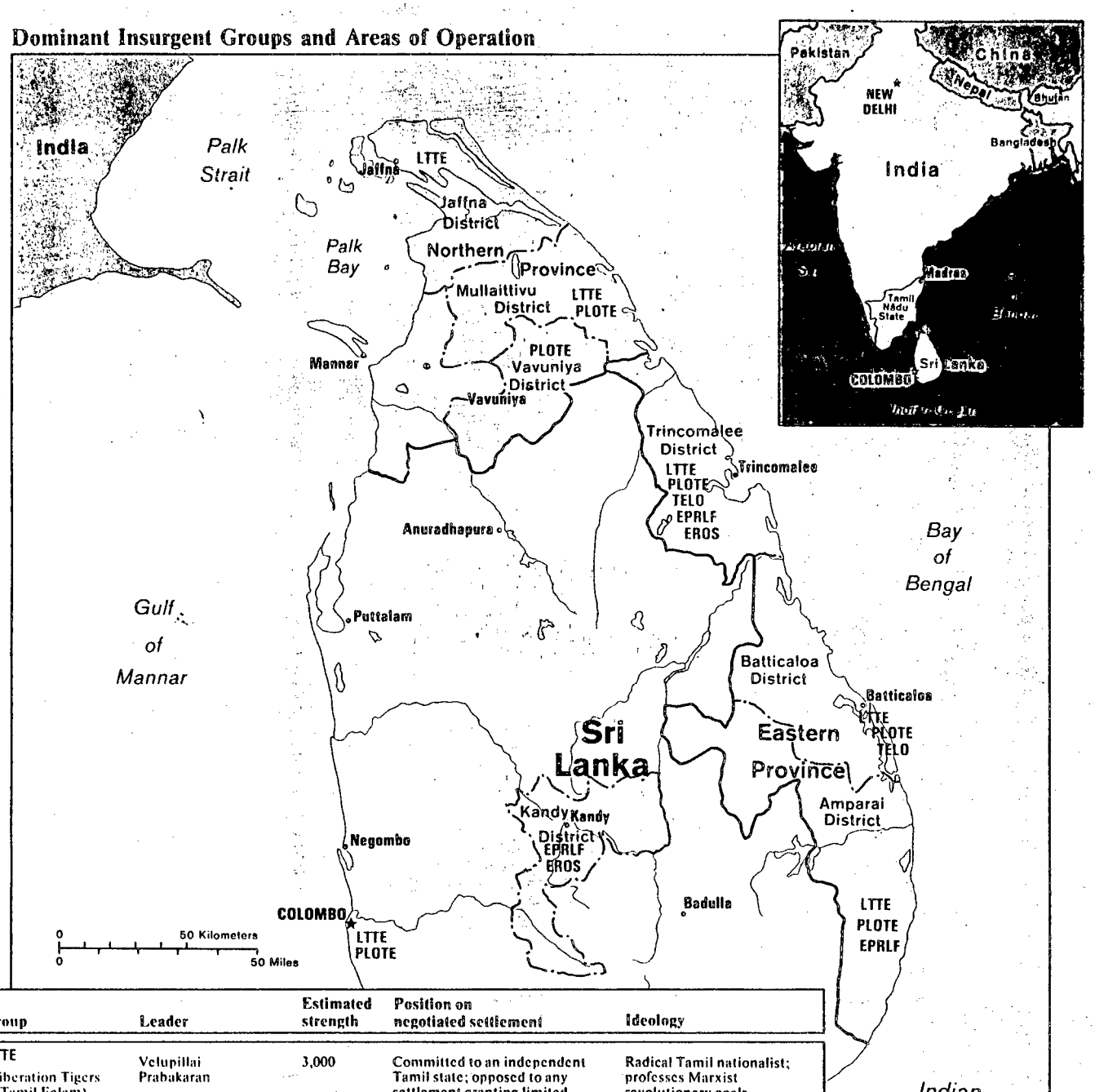
Dominant Insurgent Groups and Areas of Operation



Group	Leader	Estimated strength	Position on negotiated settlement	Ideology
LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam)	Velupillai Prabakaran	3,000	Committed to an independent Tamil state; opposed to any settlement granting limited autonomy to Tamil areas.	Radical Tamil nationalist; professes Marxist revolutionary goals.
PLOTE (People's Liberation Organization of Tamil Eelam)	Uma Maheswaran	4,000	Willing to cooperate with Tamil moderates; probably will attempt to dominate any future Tamil provincial government.	Marxist; views Tamil state as first stage in building Marxist revolutionary society in Sri Lanka.
TELO (Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization	Decentralized leadership after death of group founder Sri Sabaratnam	1,000	Under heavy Indian influence; probably unable to mount any opposition to a settlement.	Tamil nationalist rank and file; Marxist leadership.
EPRLF (Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front)	K. Padmanabha	800	Some members likely to accept a settlement; others may defect to LTTE to continue fighting.	Tamil nationalist rank and file; Marxist leadership.
EROS (Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students)	V. Balakumar	800	May accept a settlement but likely to continue island wide operations.	Marxist; specializes in economic sabotage.

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